

Robert P. LaBelle

Robert LaBelle, as the Deputy Associate Director for Offshore Minerals Management, serves as Chief Operating Officer for the management of all facets of the Offshore Program, including policy development, policy implementation, and program planning. He is responsible for directing the implementation of Offshore's Strategic Plan and serves as Executive Secretary for the Offshore Steering Committee, as well as Chairman of the Offshore Information Management Committee.

Previously, as Chief of the MMS Environmental Division, Mr. LaBelle was responsible for offshore oil and gas industry compliance with all environmental requirements, including water and air quality, endangered species, oil spill risk analysis, and archaeology, in all U.S. Federal waters. He oversaw a large environmental research program and the preparation of Environmental Impact Assessments and other decision documents used for both offshore energy and mining activities.

In 1996, he received the Citation for Meritorious Service from the Department of the Interior in recognition of his scientific accomplishments. He is an internationally recognized expert on the subject of oil spill trajectory analysis and risk assessment, with over 100 publications and technical reports on this and other environmental issues. His work has provided a key tool in addressing State and local community concerns about the effects that oil spills may have on coastal and local resources. He has also helped other agencies in risk assessment, including the 1989 Presidential Task Force on Outer Continental Shelf Leasing, the U.S. Coast Guard's analysis of "tanker-free zones" off U.S. coastlines, and the Domestic Energy Council's and the Department of Commerce's 1996 environmental review of exporting Alaska North Slope oil. He has participated by invitation in international training sessions on ocean issues in Russia, Mexico, Norway, the UK, Venezuela and Japan.

In prior positions, Mr. LaBelle was Chief of the MMS Technology Assessment and Research Branch, where he led research on engineering and technical aspects of offshore production and development. Previous positions at MMS and USGS include Chief of the Environmental Operations and Analysis Branch, and Chief of the Branch of Environmental Modeling. Prior to joining Interior, Mr. LaBelle worked for Martin Marietta Corp. as an environmental analyst on the siting of electrical power plants and on assessing the effects of nuclear power stations on aquatic species. Mr. LaBelle is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts (BS), the University of Maryland (MS), and Loyola College (MBA).